



WE ALL BELONG TO A
LARGER-THAN-LIFE STORY, OVER
TWO HUNDRED YEARS IN THE MAKING.
AS ALABAMIANS, OUR STORY IS BEING CRAFTED
BY THE MOMENTS THAT BOTH DEFINE AND REFINE
WHO WE ARE. A TIGHTLY WOVEN TAPESTRY OF TRIALS,
TRIUMPHS AND TRANSFORMATIONS, THIS VIBRANT TALE
CELEBRATES OUR COMMONALITIES AND HONORS OUR
INDIVIDUALITIES. IT IS AN EPIC ADVENTURE, TWISTING ITS
WAY THROUGH THE PEAKS AND VALLEYS OF THE PAST AND
TAKING HOPEFUL TURNS FOR THE FUTURE. ITS PLOT IS
STEEPED IN LITTLE-KNOWN SECRETS AND MONUMENTAL
EVENTS FOREVER CARVED IN HISTORY. ITS SETTING SPANS
EVERY COUNTY IN THE STATE AND FEATURES A FULL AND
FASCINATING CAST OF LOCAL, UNSUNG HEROES AND
WORLD-FAMOUS CHAMPIONS OF CHANGE. WELCOME
TO THE UNPRECEDENTED, UNABRIDGED
AND OFTEN UNEXPECTED STORY OF
MAKING ALABAMA. A BICENTENNIAL
TRAVELING EXHIBIT.



Nominating statement – Alabama Humanities Foundation – August 2019

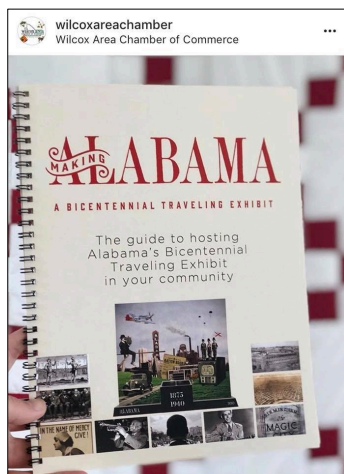
From 2016 to the present, staff of the Alabama Humanities Foundation (AHF) have been responsible for creation of MAKING ALABAMA: A BICENTENNIAL TRAVELING EXHIBIT and all logistics associated with the exhibit's tour to one venue in each of the state's 67 counties. When we include venues like the Alabama State Capitol, Alabama Public Television headquarters, and the Alabama National Fair in Montgomery, we look at a total of 69 installations within 22 months in commemoration of 200 years of statehood.



When AHF's Board of Directors voted in 2015 to undertake this major project on behalf of the people of Alabama and the state legislature's Alabama Bicentennial Initiative, they believed that the project would both serve and be well-served by AHF's mission – to foster learning, understanding, and appreciation of Alabama's peoples, communities, and cultures.

AHF's aims in undertaking the project, then, were to engage the organization in an unprecedented statewide effort – a project to physically take place in every one of Alabama's 67 counties in collaboration with local communities – and to spread a message about the humanities' usefulness in everyday life to people across Alabama. Bringing the humanities and AHF program resources to bear on this major initiative struck leadership as a unique opportunity to reach new audiences and cultivate relationships to benefit AHF and the state alike as Alabamians embark on another century of statehood.

AHF also sought to strengthen its relationships with the Alabama legislature and state government agencies. Having received little to no funding through appropriations in the state budget for some time, the Bicentennial exhibit project offered AHF a highly-visible project throughout which to serve the state and make both elected and appointed officials aware of the organization's resources and potential to continue contributing to the health of the state beyond the Bicentennial.



Another aim of the project was to build capacity in local communities by applying lessons from the Smithsonian's Museum on Main Street (MoMS) program, which AHF has coordinated for over 25 years in Alabama, to Alabama's Bicentennial. In the ways that it has inspired cultural innovation and cooperation in small towns across Alabama, the MoMS model seemed a recipe for success and a pathway to sustainability for the Bicentennial exhibit project.

Following the MoMS model, hosts responsible for MAKING ALABAMA's visit to their counties receive encouragement, suggestions, and training from AHF, which leads them to take ownership of the project. That sense of ownership is expressed when hosts:

- Attend regional training workshops coordinated and led by AHF staff members;
- Coordinate complementary programming and exhibits;
- Write grant proposals to fund ancillary activities and/or buses for field trips across a county;
- Train others in how to prepare for the exhibit's arrival, tenure, and departure from their county;
- Plan for, greet, unload from the truck, unpack, assemble, promote, monitor, maintain, and serve as docents for the exhibit;
- Organize school, church, club and other groups' visits, often including transportation;
- Disassemble, pack, and load the exhibit onto a truck bound for the next county/venue.

In each exhibit venue, local persons step up and make use of – or develop new skills for making – connections between individuals and organizations to aid Bicentennial commemorations envisioned by their communities. Collectively, traveling exhibit hosts comprise a statewide MAKING ALABAMA network that AHF aims to see inspire and support one another beyond the life of the state's three-year Bicentennial initiative.



To date, MAKING ALABAMA has been viewed by over 200,000 Alabama residents and visitors. With promotional support from the Alabama Bicentennial Commission and other partners on a state level and from every partner in each of the 67 counties, many more hundreds of thousands of Alabamians have been drawn into the MAKING ALABAMA community.



The project's greatest public impact is gauged by the efforts it has inspired on local levels. Projects designed to complement MAKING ALABAMA's visits are as varied as the counties in the state. In many communities, intergenerational cooperation is on display as youth assemble and elders serve as docents for the exhibit. Local history exhibits now exist in many communities' libraries, courthouses, or town clerks' offices; the Bicentennial exhibit visit made occasion for creating them and now they will be on display indefinitely. Other exhibit organizers sponsor children's art contests, poetry readings, or Bicentennial book groups in conjunction with the exhibit's visit. And five communities have requested to assume ownership of circulating copies of the interactive, tablet-based exhibit in order to build permanent local history museums around MAKING ALABAMA.



Partnerships with fellow statewide organizations – public agencies, private non-profits, and corporations – indicate public impact and were necessary to the development of the exhibit tour and cultivation of host committees. Partnerships include the Alabama Department of Archives and History, Alabama State Council on the Arts, Alabama Department of Tourism and Travel, Encyclopedia of Alabama, Alabama Historical Commission, and Alabama Public Television.

Organizations with whom new partnerships were formed include the Alabama League of Municipalities and scores of chambers of commerce, libraries, civic groups, historical and genealogical societies, theaters, arts councils, and regional tourism offices across Alabama.



In addition to the traveling exhibit, AHF maintains a BICENTENNIAL SCHOLARS program – a “speakers’ bureau” to complement the exhibit tour, though it serves any community. Humanities scholars make presentations on topics related specifically to Alabama history and culture. AHF Bicentennial Scholars have visited nearly every county. In addition to elucidating topics found in the MAKING ALABAMA exhibit, the scholars represent colleges and universities statewide and their public presentations help raise Alabamians’ awareness of AHF’s perennial Road Scholars Speakers Bureau program.



Richard Bailey – Author of *Neither Carpetbaggers Nor Scalawags: Black Officeholders During Reconstruction of Alabama, 1867 - 1878* (New South, 2010), Dr. Bailey is a lecturer on Alabama history, southern history, and contemporary issues.

Jonathan Bass – Author of *Blessed are the Peacemakers: Martin Luther King, Jr., Eight white religious leaders and the "Letter from Birmingham Jail"* (Louisiana State University, 2001), which was nominated for the Pulitzer Prize, Dr. Bass lectures on Recent America and the South, Civil Rights, and Legal History.

Steven Brown – Author of *John McKinley and the Antebellum Supreme Court: Circuit Riding in the Old Southwest* (University of Alabama Press, 2012), Dr. Brown also curated the traveling exhibit, ALABAMA JUSTICE: CASES AND FACES THAT CHANGED A NATION with the Alabama Bicentennial Commission.

Mike Bunn – Author of *Early Alabama: An Illustrated Guide to the Formative Years, 1798-1826* (University of Alabama Press, 2019) and other books, Bunn 's presentation, “Alabama: From Territory to State,” is a fast-moving and richly illustrated introduction to Alabama’s tumultuous founding era.

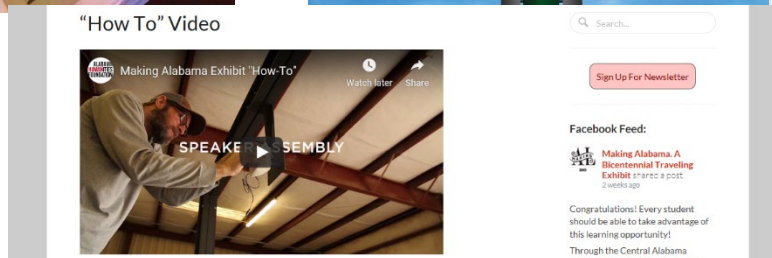
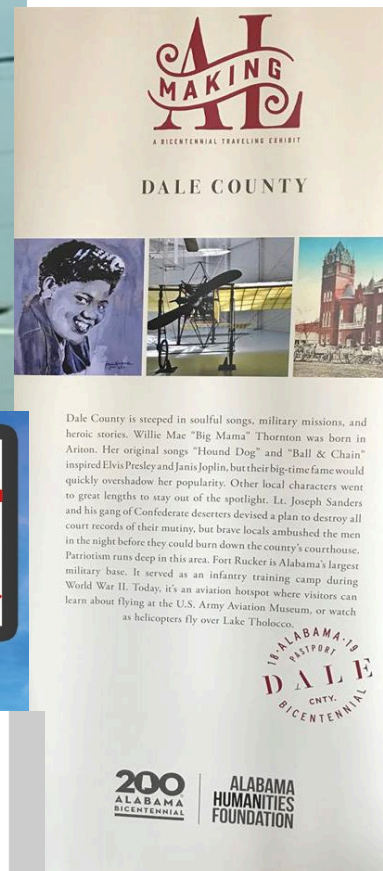
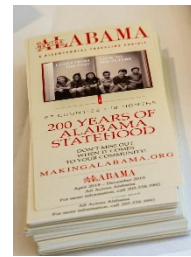
Valerie Pope Burnes – Author of *Visions of the Black Belt: A Cultural Survey of the Heart of Alabama* (University of Alabama Press, 2015), Dr. Burnes introduces audiences to the Black Belt region of Alabama, its towns, architecture, and panoply of farmers, craftspeople, cooks, writers, and musicians.

Bertis English – Editor-in-Chief of the *International Journal of Africana Studies*, Dr. English provides audiences perspectives on Alabama history and its Bicentennial from the point of view of a scholar of American political and social history.

Frances Osborn Robb – Author of *Shot in Alabama: A History of Photography 1839-1941 and a List of Photographers* (University of Alabama Press, 2017), Robb is known widely for her expertise in photograph identification and contextualization, which she offers audiences during lively presentation and discussion programs to which attendees are encouraged to bring their oldest family photographs.

MAKING ALABAMA – fabrication of six physical, circulating copies of the exhibit, their design, and the design and printing of ancillary materials accompanying exhibits to each location – was funded, exclusive of AHF staff time, by the Alabama State Legislature through an appropriation made to the Alabama Council on Higher Education and assigned to AHF. AHF was thus charged with fiscal and administrative management of the state’s official Bicentennial exhibit. A cost breakdown looks like this:

- Alabama exhibit design firm and Alabama fabricators – \$500,000+
- Tabloid-style newsprint exhibit guides and their distribution – \$300,000+
- Community grants to exhibit host committees/venues -- \$67,000
- Localized rack cards for promotion in each county – \$10,000
- Localized pull-up banners for use in local venues – \$15,000
- Web site; promotional events/TV/radio/print spots – \$35,000



Additional support for the project comes from AAA Cooper Transportation, an Alabama-based freight company long a partner in AHF’s coordination of the Museum on Main Street program. Having transported MoMS exhibits statewide as a gift to AHF and host communities for over ten years, AAA Cooper committed the same services on a much larger scale for the Bicentennial. The company has donated hundreds of thousands of dollars of in-kind labor, truck space and fuel moving MAKING ALABAMA out of three locations and to another three locations, on average, every month since April 2017.



MAKING ALABAMA features original artwork depicting Alabama's history in eight time periods. Interactive tablets engage visitors in reading about decisions and turning points that have shaped Alabama. Designed by Tatum Design of Homewood, Alabama, MAKING ALABAMA is designed to communicate that the Bicentennial is not about the past; it's an occasion to inspire thoughts and feelings about Alabama's future. Content partners for the exhibit are the Alabama Department of Archives and History, particularly its digital image collection, and the online Encyclopedia of Alabama, to which AHF holds copyright.

Alabama history's eight periods of time are described in eight words. In order, the words are WONDER, CONFLICT, FEVER, CONVICTION, POWER, STRUGGLE, CHANGE, and HOPE.

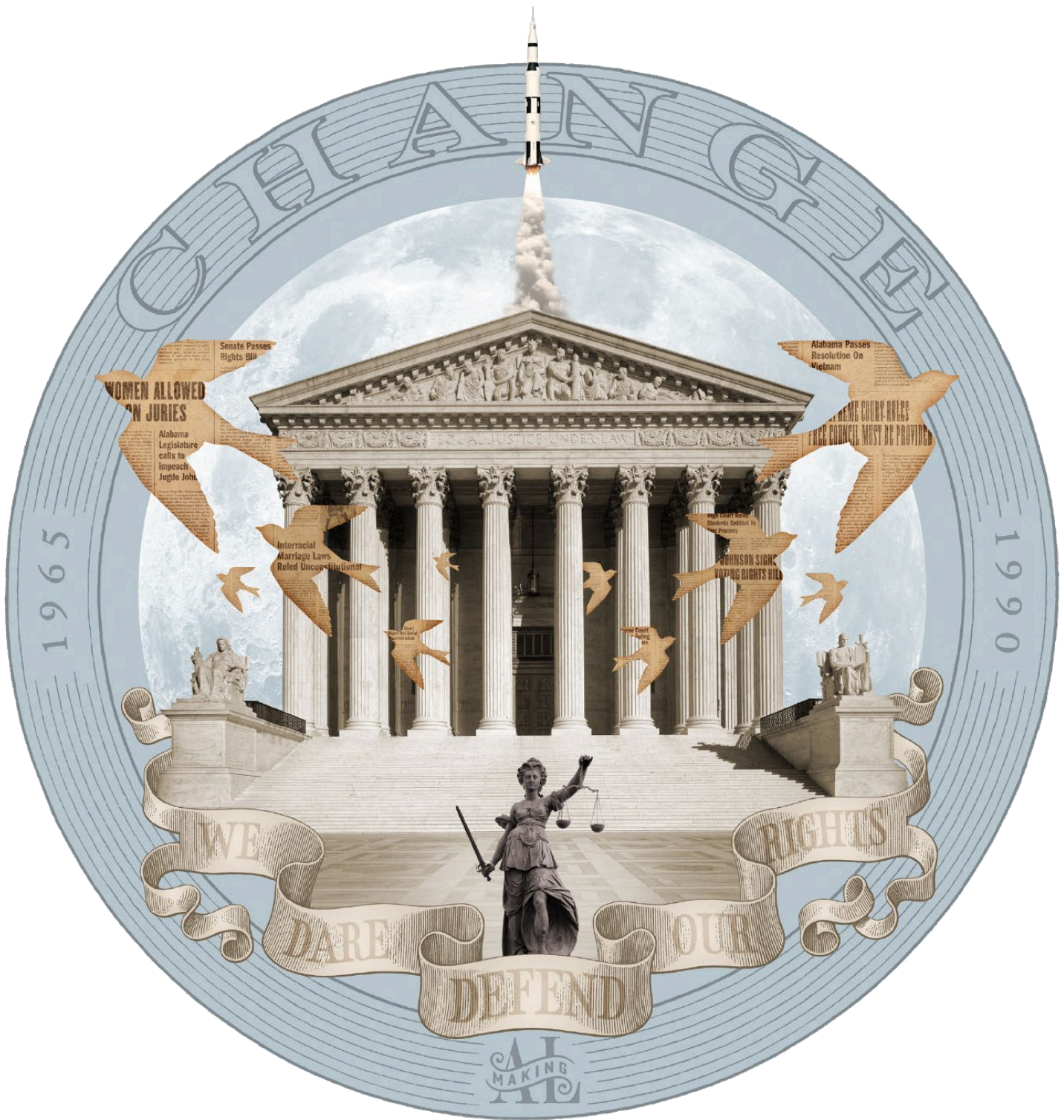














Brief Program Description:

MAKING ALABAMA: A BICENTENNIAL TRAVELING EXHIBITION is Alabama Humanities Foundation's contribution to a three-year initiative commemorating two centuries of Alabama statehood. The project spreads a message about the humanities' usefulness in everyday life to people in every one of the state's 67 counties. Bringing the humanities and Alabama Humanities' program resources to bear on a major statewide commemoration reaches new audiences, cultivates relationships, and encourages Alabamians to embark on a new century of statehood with questions about how we got to where we are today and how to see one another with hope for the future.

<https://www.makingalabama.org/>


MAKING ALABAMA

A BICENTENNIAL TRAVELING EXHIBIT

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Overview

Making Alabama. A Bicentennial Traveling Exhibit is a statewide celebration of 200 years of statehood presented by Alabama Humanities Foundation in partnership with Alabama Department of Archives and History and Alabama Bicentennial Commission.






The exhibit will crisscross the state March 2018 through November 2019, touring all 67 of Alabama's counties with up to three-week engagements in each host community.

The exhibit features:

- Eight periods of history that defined Alabama as a state – decisions and turning points that shaped what the state would become and what it will be – all in an impressive display to retrace our state's footsteps featuring people, places and cultures that are still Making Alabama.
- Interactive displays to engage audiences.
- Local exhibits and events created by host communities to showcase their own roles in Alabama history and culture, present and future.


Join us for this truly historic event, a celebration 200 years in the making!




 **Making Alabama. A Bicentennial Traveling Exhibit** shared a post. 2 weeks ago

Congratulations! Every student should be able to take advantage of this learning opportunity!

Through the Central Alabama Community Foundation, our local bicentennial committee was able to secure grant funding for the transportation of all fourth graders in Elmore County public schools to attend Elmore County's hosting of the Making Alabama. A Bicentennial Traveling Exhibit in October!! We can't wait! @Wetumpka AL200 Celebration Committee #wetuAL200 #wecantogether #lovethisplace

 Photo

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 **Making Alabama. A Bicentennial Traveling Exhibit** 3 weeks ago

Congratulations to AHF Executive Director Armand DeKeyser, who was appointed to National Council on the Humanities. What an honor for AHF. Under his leadership, grants and programs have thrived, and Making Alabama. A Bicentennial Traveling Exhibit became reality across our state!

Sixteen New Members Appointed to the National Council on the Humanities

Press Release Sixteen New Members Confirmed to the National Council on the Humanities TwitterFacebook

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Making Alabama. A Bicentennial Traveling Exhibit
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 **Making Alabama. A Bicentennial Traveling Exhibit** shared a photo.
May 25 · 🌐

Who's your favorite Alabamian? Here's what Jeanne Weaver of Hoover had to say at Making Alabama. A Bicentennial Traveling Exhibit when it came to her community. She is standing in front of two of her favorites featured at the exhibit -- William B. Bankhead and Rosa Parks.

A retired history teacher with a doctorate earned at age 62, she shared her thoughts on people and places in Alabama for #peopleofalabama as the state readies to turn 200.



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Making Alabama. A Bicentennial Traveling Exhibit

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Birmingham | 75°

BUSINESS COMMUNITY INNOVATION WEATHER CENTER ABOUT US

The exhibition, presented by the Alabama Humanities Foundation (AHF) and funded through a grant provided by the state Legislature, will travel to all 67 counties in Alabama throughout the next year and half. It will explore the decisions and turning points that shaped the state's history, from its early Native American heritage, through statehood, the Civil War, and civil rights -- forming the Alabama of today and influencing the Alabama of tomorrow.



Armand DeKeyser
Executive Director, Alabama Humanities Foundation

Making Alabama Humanities Foundation Exhibit bringing the Bicentennial to Alabamians from Alabama NewsCenter on Vimeo.



HOME STORIES VIDEOS PARTNERS WHY ALABAMA



Laure Anderson, director of operations for the Alabama Humanities Foundation, and Nelsie Browner, outreach coordinator for the bicentennial, view the various components of the Making Alabama traveling exhibit. The exhibit will debut in Montgomery on March 5. (Photo courtesy of the Alabama Humanities Foundation)

Making Alabama: Bicentennial traveling exhibit will tell state's story in every county

ALABAMA WONDER, CONFLICT, FEVER, CONVICTION. Power. Struggle. Change. Hope. Two centuries of Alabama history summed up in eight words.

Those concepts form a storytelling framework for the Alabama Humanities Foundation's traveling exhibit "Making Alabama," which is journeying to each of the state's 67 counties as part of Alabama's bicentennial celebration. The words outline a chronological, interactive exhibit detailing periods that have defined the state, its people, and

a whole lot of interpretation. If they see that "this followed this, which followed this," they can draw their own conclusions about why we face the challenges we do."

The exhibit covers some of the state's most famous people's stories, such as Rosa Parks and the Montgomery bus boycott, or country singer Hank Williams, who was born in Mount Olive. But it also includes some lesser-known stories, like that of Sequoyah, a Native American who created the Cherokee alphabet in the 1820s while living

Berlin Olympics, and when the black boxer and Alabama native Joe Louis knocked out German boxer Max Schmeling in June 1938, it meant more than just individual wins—they were triumphs for the entire country.

"Making Alabama" is modeled on the Smithsonian Institution's Museum on Main Street, which sends ready-to-install exhibitions to small communities across America and encourages each locality to add their own specific stories to their programming.

Hubbertville School was a natural fit to host the exhibit, says Glen Allen mayor and Hubbertville graduate Allen Dunavant, who campaigned to bring "Making Alabama" to the K-12 school. He says Fayette was one of the first counties in northwest Alabama to pass a resolution to bring the exhibit to its community.

Local students took trips to "Making Alabama" throughout its week on campus. A third-grade student on a visit to the library came away excited about sixteenth-century Spanish explorer Hernando de Soto.

"He said to me, 'Oh my goodness, Hernando de Soto—I know all about him,'" Dunavant remembers. "He started rambling off stuff. I asked him where he learned all that stuff. He said, 'I read.'"

Anderson says she hopes "Making Alabama" will teach Alabamians, like that Glen Allen third grader, even more about their home state and inspire them to discover how diverse its ecology, economy, and population are.

Alabamians are more complicated than they sometimes let on, says Anderson. "We divide ourselves into two or three groups of people, into ways of thinking, and worry about the stereotypes people outside Alabama apply to us."

The exhibit's last installation, Hope, explores Alabama from the 1990s to the present, a time of reconciliation and revitalization. It cites the 2001 and 2002 convictions of the Ku Klux Klan members responsible for the 1963 Birmingham church bombing that killed four young girls. It highlights Alabama natives such as Octavia Spencer, who was born in Montgomery and is just one of two black actresses to have received three Academy Award nominations, and the Grammy-winning Alabama Shakes, a blues/rock band from Athens. As industry continues to energize the region, from the Mercedes-Benz assembly plant in Vance to Airbus's assembly and delivery site in Mobile, the exhibit shows the state's economic growth.

The humanities are key to conveying that message of hope, Anderson says. "They help us see one another as fully human," she says. "If we're going to go into our next century in Alabama and address issues that have to be addressed, we have to see one another in the context of our history and culture."

"The biggest thing I want people to take away is an interest in looking at who we want to be for the future," Anderson continued. "The exhibit itself is about the past, but the intent is to get people to think about the future of our state and whom our state is for."

—HALEY HERFURTH

WITNESS TO 200 Years of History

culture. For example, "conflict" describes Alabama in the eighteenth century, when France, England, and Spain all competed for a foothold in the region. "Struggle" represents the civil rights era and the United States' fight to defeat fascism during World War II.

Laura Caldwell Anderson, director of operations for the Alabama Humanities Foundation (AHF) and curator of "Making Alabama," spent the better part of two years compiling information for the exhibit, utilizing the AHF's online *Encyclopedia of Alabama* and using visual assets—such as images of sixteenth-century pottery that had been recovered from Moundville, Alabama. Anderson, speaking as a historian and archivist, says that a chronological exhibit made sense to her.

"When we divide up the story of Alabama into themes, we fail to see that to look at the past is to see how we got where we are," Anderson says. "Curious people don't need

ing in what would become Fort Payne, or how 18 of the 87 delegates drafting the 1868 state constitution were black. It tells the story of the world's largest cast-iron statue, a depiction of the Roman god Vulcan, crafted by Giuseppe Moretti for the 1904 World's Fair, which sits atop Birmingham's Red Mountain as a tribute to the region's iron and steel industry. And it shows that when the black Alabamian runner Jesse Owens took home four gold medals from the 1936

"These communities buy in to being hosts," Anderson explains. "They learn about the topic of the exhibit, they physically greet the exhibit, take it out of crates, set it up, maintain it, pack it back up—they have to be good stewards of it."

The exhibit caretakers at Hubbertville School in Fayette County certainly subscribed to that idea while the exhibit was on display in its library in February.

High school students helped install the exhibit and fourth graders dressed up as famous Alabamians such as author Harper Lee, baseball player Hank Aaron, and author and activist Helen Keller to provide an even more interactive experience for visitors. The school produced a locally themed exhibit to run alongside "Making Alabama," featuring photos from Fayette County's history, birdhouses built by a community craftsman, and scorecards from 1930s pickup baseball games against the nearby rival in New River.



WONDER, CONFLICT, AND FEVER ALL DESCRIBE IMPORTANT ERAS IN ALABAMA'S HISTORY. —TATUM DESIGN

Links to other NEWS about the exhibit and hosts/partners updated daily and available on the exhibit web site:

<https://www.makingalabama.org/category/inthenews/>

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Columbiana breaks ground on facility that could make town an art destination

July 20, 2018
admin
In the News

By Hannah Ward, Reporter Connect (Source: WBRC Video) COLUMBIANA, AL (WBRC) – Shelby County breaks ground on a facility Thursday that could make the area an art and entertainment destination. It is a big project for the town of Columbiana and Mayor Stancliff Handley says has huge potential. "It is going to totally change their [...]"

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Cleburne County gets its view of traveling state bicentennial exhibit

July 20, 2018
admin
In the News

Visible from this angle are several elements of the traveling exhibit about the history of Alabama, called "Making Alabama," which celebrates the state's upcoming bicentennial. The exhibit opens Friday at the Hefflin Armory. Presented by the Alabama Humanities Foundation, the exhibit features large collages and drawings with interactive tablets. By Bill Wilson, Star Staff Writer, wwilson@annistonstar.com [...]"

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AL Bicentennial Exhibit opens in Ozark

July 20, 2018
admin
In the News

WSFA.com Montgomery Alabama news. By Justin McNeelley, Sports Reporter Connect The exhibit is free and open to the public every Monday through Saturday from 11 a.m. until 5 p.m. until June 23. (Source: WSFA 12 News) OZARK, AL (WSFA) – The Making Alabama Bicentennial Traveling Exhibit is officially on display at the Rudd Art Center in [...]"

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Facebook Feed:

Making Alabama A Bicentennial Traveling Exhibit 2 days ago

What a fantastic opening in Greene County for Making Alabama. A Bicentennial Traveling Exhibit. The exhibit is on display at the National Guard Armory at 809 Mesopotamia Street in Eufaula now through Aug. 28. Court mile to. For the upcoming schedule as it makes its way to all 67 counties, go to makingalabama.org. Greene County, Alabama Eufaula, Alabama Alabama 200

Photo

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Making Alabama A Bicentennial Traveling Exhibit 2 weeks ago

Congratulations! Every student should be able to take advantage of this learning opportunity! Through the Central Alabama Community Foundation, our local bicentennial committee was able to secure grant funding for the transportation of all fourth graders in Elmore County public schools to attend Elmore County's hosting of the Making Alabama A Bicentennial Traveling Exhibit in October! We

